Wood, William

DRAWER 19A

Artists-W

71.2002.085.02721

Artists of Abraham Lincoln portraits

William Wood

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the

Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

71. 2009. 085. 02721

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ANDOVER 3-5151

February 24, 1949

Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor
Lincoln Lore
Lincoln National Life Insurance Company
Ft. Wayne, Indiana

Dear Dr. Warren:

The writer had the privilege of meeting you when you spoke at the Union League Club in Chicago last year. I also receive Lincoln Lore and value it most highly.

The January 3rd issue of Lincoln Lore, No. 1030, on the Lincoln statue by French, suggested to me the fact that you may have an interest in all Lincoln subjects, other than matters of strictly historical value or matters incidental to the life of Lincoln.

I am, therefore, taking the liberty of mailing you herewith a photograph of an original drawing by Mr. William Wood, aged 64, of Chicago, who is my friend and client and a man whom many reputable authorities consider one of the best portrait artists living today.

Mr. Wood brought the original picture to my office a few days ago, told me its history, and said that he would like to sell it.

I am not assuming that you would be interested in buying it, but thought you might be interested in seeing it and possibly in giving us your comments on it. I thought too that the quality of the picture, coupled with its short story, might possibly merit a mention in Lincoln Lore. Of course, if you could suggest any party that might be interested in acquiring the original drawing, that would be greatly appreciated.

Mr. Wood made the drawing in Springfield, Illinois, in May of 1931 after a week of research under the guidance of

Mr. W. H. Fay, custodian of the tomb, who gave the artist free access to examine all of his collection of Lincoln's pictures. He was also assisted by a friend of Mr. Fay by the name of Thompson, who, he understood, had been a Lincoln pall bearer, and by the Lincoln Centennial Society and the Illinois Historical Society. The artist examined every photograph or reproduction of Lincoln and this is his own original conception based on this exhaustive study of the subject.

The portrait had originally been intended as a gift from the then Governor of Illinois, Louis S. Emerson, to President Herbert Hoover on the occasion of the latter's visit to the Lincoln tomb, but for some unknown reason the parties who had commissioned the artist did not perform their part of the obligation. I believe the drawing would have been kept by Mr. Wood throughout his lifetime had he not now found himself pressed with some financial obligations.

The original portrait in our possession is a sanguine drawing 18 x 24 inches in size and in excellent condition. It It shows some natural aging, which seems appropriate to Lincoln, since it was drawn in 1931, though I am told that an engraver can strengthen the drawing or lighten the background for more contrast if that is desired.

The portrait has not been copyrighted, not withstanding the notation on the photograph. We can warrant to you that it has never been published or reproduced in any form, other than the enclosed photograph, and has never been shown publicly. With your expert knowledge of the subject and familiarity with all existing Lincoln portraits, I am sure you will know immediately whether the artist has produced a faithful likeness of President Lincoln differing enough from other existing likenesses to make it an outstanding work of art. Any comments or suggestions you care to make, I am sure will be sincerely appreciated by the artist. I will be glad to submit the original drawing for your inspection, if you should care to see it. I am also enclosing a personal data sheet concerning the artist.

Thanking you for your consideration, I am

Yours very truly,

Marion E. Burks

Marion E. Burks

MEB:ecm
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http://archive.org/details/artistsofabrahawlinc

Wood, Wm

March 24, 1949

Mr. Marion E. Burks
134 South LaSalle Street
Chicago 3, Illinois

My dear Mr. Burks:

Thanks very much for submitting a copy of the very interesting painting by Mr. Wood but as you probably know our chief interest is centered here in the Brady photograph and reproductions of it so we would have no place for this very fine study. Thank you nevertheless for calling it to our attention and if we have inquiries for paintings of this kind we will be most certain to refer them to you.

Very truly yours,

LAW/DPB
L. A. Warren

Director

Wood, William

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